

God of All

Story: God of All

Storylink: <https://www.fanfiction.net/s/8130102/1/>

Category: Lion King

Genre: Adventure/Romance

Author: ThatPersonYouMightKnow

Authorlink: <https://www.fanfiction.net/u/3365186/>

Last updated: 05/22/2012

Words: 11612

Rating: T

Status: Complete

Content: Chapter 1 to 7 of 7 chapters

Source: FanFiction.net

Summary: After getting into an argument with his mother, Simba runs away with Zazu, and becomes the god of a mysterious pride...

Chapter 1: Chapter 1: Grow Up, Simba

AN: New story! This is an interesting one, because it explores the relationship between two very different characters. I hope you'll enjoy it!

God of All

Chapter One: Grow Up, Simba

Sarabi sighed as she walked across the den, disappointment swelling up inside of her. She was a little tired of this now.

And it was all because of Simba. Her very own son.

He just didn't listen. He didn't listen to his own parents. Ever since he was born, they had tried to teach him what was right and what was wrong. They thought he understood. But lately, he just seemed so... disobedient.

For example, half the time they didn't even know where he was. Chances were that he wasn't even in the Pride Lands, and had disappeared to some far-off place. Usually, he didn't return until many hours later – often arriving back home in the middle of the night.

He'd wake up the next morning, and the same thing would start all over again. Simba had become so immature, and to be honest, Sarabi didn't know what to do. How could she make him listen to her for once? That is, if he *could* listen to her.

Sarabi spotted Simba in the corner of the den, sleeping on the ground, his paw around his lovely girlfriend and future queen, Nala.

Sarabi couldn't help but smile. They were a pretty adorable couple.

But that wasn't her focus right now. Her focus was on Simba. She was going to make sure that he listened.

She nudged Simba on his side with a paw. "Simba," she called. "Wake up."

Simba made a little noise in his sleep, and rolled over, as if ignoring her. Like he was telling her, "No, Mom, leave me alone."

But Sarabi wasn't going to give in that easily. She had a job to do. "Come on, Simba," she said, nudging him harder this time.

That seemed to do the trick. Simba grunted, his eyes snapping open. He turned over to face his mother, a surprised expression on his face. "Mom?" he said, sounding a little shocked to see her. "What are you doing here?"

"This may come as a surprise to you, but I *live* here, Simba," Sarabi retorted. "We need to talk – *now*."

"Talk?" Simba rubbed one of his eyes with a paw. "What do you want to talk about? I just had a weird dream about pink elephants, if you're interested in that kind of thing." He noticed the stern expression on his mother's face, and he quickly gave her a nervous smile. "Or is there something else you want to say?"

"Something else, Simba," Sarabi replied, causing Simba to gulp nervously. "I'm not happy, Simba. *Not happy*."

"But..." Simba didn't understand. "But what did I do? I've only been sleeping."

"You've done *too* much, Simba," his mother informed him. "*Too* much. I'm very disappointed in you."

"But I haven't done anything!" Simba protested. "Why am I in trouble if I haven't done anything wrong?"

"Where were you yesterday, Simba?" Sarabi asked, knowing what his answer was going to be.

"Uh... I went somewhere," he replied, not getting where she was going with this. "You know – with Nala and Haiba."

"And what does 'somewhere' mean?" retorted Sarabi. "I want to know *where*, Simba. *Where* did you go?"

"To some place in the middle of nowhere," Simba told her. "Don't worry, though. That frog won't be causing any more trouble."

"Frog?" Sarabi raised an eyebrow. "Simba, what are you talking about? You see, this is what I mean. You lie to me, and you don't listen."

"*What?*" Simba's eyes widened.

"Don't you use that tone with me, young man," Sarabi snapped. "I'm your mother, and it's about time you showed me some respect for once. You're always disobeying me and your father."

"How?" Simba still didn't understand. "I'm just doing my own thing. What do you *want* from me?"

"You never tell us where you're going, Simba," Sarabi explained. "Sometimes you disappear for a whole day, and you don't come back until late at night. What are you doing? What's so important that you can't even tell your own mother?"

"I have... adventures," Simba answered, sounding a little hesitant. "Very... cool adventures, you know?"

"I don't think that's all," said Sarabi. "What happens when you go on these 'adventures', Simba? I hope you're not putting your life at risk. And Nala and Haiba's, for that matter."

"Well, sometimes they can be a little... dangerous," Simba told her shyly, looking down at the ground. "But everything works out for us in the end. It always does."

"Dangerous?" Sarabi's eyes widened. "Simba, I can't have you going out and getting yourself into trouble."

"*I'm* not the one getting into trouble!" Simba argued. "It's the bad guys! They're always trying to kill me!"

Sarabi gasped. "*Kill* you?" She was shocked. People were trying to murder her son? "Simba, this is serious. Who's trying to kill you?"

Simba waved a paw in the air. "Oh, they're all dead now, anyway."

"You *killed* them?" Sarabi sounded horrified.

"No, no, no!" Simba shook his head. "I didn't kill them! Well, maybe I slashed them a couple of times, but I didn't – I mean – I wasn't – I never—"

Sarabi looked down at the ground, shaking her head in disgust. "I'm ashamed of you, Simba. I can't believe I gave birth to an immature cub like you."

"Immature?" Simba exclaimed. "I'm not immature! Why do you keep saying that? If you could see the things I've done—"

"Then I'd probably disown you," Sarabi interrupted. "I'm absolutely disgusted with you, Simba. As your punishment, you can stay in this den for a whole month, and you're *not* to talk to Nala and Haiba."

"No way!" Simba yelled. "You can't tell me what to do!"

"*Two months!*" Sarabi shot back.

"*Shut up!*" Simba roared, causing the entire den to fall silent. "I hate you!"

Sarabi just stared at her son in disbelief. Had he actually said that? Was it just her imagination? Her son would *never* say that...

Would he?

With that, Simba ran out of the den as fast as he could, not looking back once.

He never wanted to see his parents ever again. They were just a bunch of jerks. They didn't understand. If they could see the brilliant, heroic things he'd done, then they'd think they had the best son in the world.

But they were just ignorant. All they cared about were themselves.

Nala's eyes flickered open, and she slowly sat up. "Have I missed anything?"

***Chapter 2*: Chapter 2: Zazu Proves Himself**

Chapter Two: Zazu Proves Himself

Simba hated his life. Everything was so unfair. He did so many things to help others. He'd saved lives. Everyone else thought of him as a hero.

So why didn't his parents? Why couldn't they understand?

They just didn't listen. They didn't pay any attention to him. They just thought he was immature, uncaring, and selfish – when really it was the complete opposite. He was just trying to protect them. If they knew the danger he got himself into, then they would never let him leave the kingdom again.

But it was far too late for that now. They knew. Knew all about the danger, the horror, and the villains.

Why couldn't he keep his big mouth shut? His parents were idiots. Complete and utter idiots. He was more responsible than the two of them put together. If he was the King right now, then he'd be doing a much better job!

Simba leant back against the tree, staring at the shimmering water by the water hole. "It's not fair," he said, closing his eyes. "No one ever understands around here."

Whenever Simba was having a tough time, he always sat by this particular tree. It was the tree that he and Nala first met by. Something about it just... calmed him down, somehow. It made him feel better. Maybe it was because it was part of a good memory – one of the happiest memories in his life.

Simba looked up at the sky, groaning. "What am I going to do?"

He couldn't go back. His parents would ground him for ever, and he wouldn't ever be able to speak to either Nala or Haiba again!

His life would be over. Maybe his parents wouldn't even let him become the King! They might decide that he wasn't fit enough, and would pick some other cub to take his place. Or his parents might have another cub of their own, and banish Simba for all eternity!

He pushed the thought out of his mind, shaking his head. "Whoa, Simba," he said to himself. "You're getting ahead of yourself. That's what you get for having an overactive imagination."

"Are you quite finished talking to yourself?" asked a voice from above Simba. "I'm finding it rather hard to sleep up here."

Simba rolled his eyes and whacked the tree with a paw. Suddenly, a rustling sound was heard from above, and a few seconds later, Zazu plummeted to the ground.

"Simba, how could you?" he yelled, picking himself up. "Where are your manners? You don't knock people out of trees when they're trying to sleep in them!"

"Zazu, what are you doing in my tree?" Simba asked. "I was trying to have a few peaceful seconds by myself. Is that too much to ask for around this dumb old place?"

"Were you not paying attention before?" replied Zazu. "I told you, Simba. This tree is one of the best in the Pride Lands. In other words, it's perfect for a little hornbill like me."

Simba chuckled. "We're gonna have a war over this tree one day," he joked. "Did you know that this was where Nala and I first met?"

Zazu frowned. "Where the nightmare began," he remarked. "I'm just lucky that I don't have to follow you two nuisances around the place anymore."

"Nuisances?" Simba repeated. "Zazu, just what is your problem against us? If it wasn't for Nala and me, then you'd probably be dead. Face it, Zazu: you can't look after yourself."

"I beg your pardon?" Zazu yelled, looking absolutely offended. "I'll have you know that I can look after myself just fine!"

"Oh, really?" Simba challenged. "Zazu, when have you ever had to defend yourself before? You were cowering like a baby when Hago and Uncle Scar tried to take over the kingdom. In fact, you were going to let them kill *us* just so you could save yourself."

"I don't cope well under pressure," Zazu told him. "But when push comes to shove, I can be a most formidable force."

"Yeah, right," said Simba, rolling his eyes. "There's not a strong bone in that tiny body of yours."

"That's what you think, fuzzy!" Zazu shot back.

"Okay, so if you're not a coward, then prove it," said Simba.

"And how am I supposed to do that?" asked Zazu. "Would you like me to perhaps throw myself off the edge of a cliff? Would that suffice?"

Simba shook his head. "Nah, that's not dangerous enough," he said, causing Zazu to look shocked. "Look, I've got an idea: why don't you come with me on a dangerous adventure? That way you can prove to me that you're not just a great, big scaredy-cat."

"You want me to come with you?" Zazu said slowly, trying to figure out if the cub was being serious or not. "Is this some kind of joke?"

"Not at all," replied Simba. "I was planning on getting out of here, anyway. Come on, Zazu – it'll be fun." A sly look appeared on his face. "Unless, of course, you're too *scared*..."

"Scared? Me?" said Zazu. "I'm not scared at all! I don't care if you drag me into a fiery pit of death!" He folded his wings. "I will refuse to show any signs of fear."

Simba chuckled sinisterly. "Then where do you want to go, Zazu?" he asked. "The Cave of Doom? The Waterfalls of Certain Death? Pick your poison."

Zazu's eyes widened in fear. "Uh... Well..."

"I haven't got all day..." said Simba in a singsong voice. "Or would you like me to choose for you?"

"Yes!" said Zazu quickly. "You choose, young master! What did you have in mind?"

Simba laughed again. He loved this. The day was turning out to be a lot less depressing than he first thought. "Oh... you'll see..." He rose to his paws, walking along the edge of the water hole. "Come on, Zazu. Here's your chance to see what it feels like to be me."

Why do I get the feeling I'm going to regret this for the rest of my life? Zazu asked himself, before spreading his wings and flying off after the Prince. "Don't go too fast now, young master! I don't want to lose you!"

He's doomed, thought Simba with a sneaky grin. Not only was he going to get away from the Pride Lands, but was also going to have a massive amount of fun torturing Zazu.

It really couldn't get any better.

AN: Simba and Zazu? I haven't tried that combination before. But this is a good chance to see how they cope together – which I doubt will be very well. This can only end in tears...

Chapter 3: Chapter 3: Where's Simba?

AN: Hello again, my lovely readers. You like it when I reveal secrets, don't you? Well, that can wait for now, but secrets will be *discussed* in the next two chapters. I'm sure that'll suffice for now, won't it?

Reldor: Yes, Zazu is quite a funny character, isn't he? I find him to be ten times better than Timon and Pumbaa.

Emily642: Cute! Yeah... I suppose, in a weird kind of way, it is a little cute. Now don't take that too seriously.

Chapter Three: Where's Simba?

"I don't understand..." said Nala, feeling confused after Sarabi had explained everything to her. "You shouted at Simba because you thought he was immature?"

"I shouted at Simba because I *knew* he was immature," Sarabi corrected her. "Nala, all he does is get you into trouble. I appreciate that you two are rather... outgoing, but this simply cannot continue. He has to learn to listen to his parents. Why does he do things like this all the time? He could get himself killed!"

"He does it because he's a good person," Nala answered, looking up at Sarabi. "And when he wants to help, he wants to help. He doesn't just do dangerous things for the sake of it. He does it for a reason."

"How do I know you're not lying to me?" Sarabi retorted. "You could just be trying to cover up the numerous mistakes Simba has made."

Nala rolled her eyes. "I don't think he would have run away if that was true," she said, before walking past Simba's mother, leaving her very shocked.

Walking across the den, Nala spotted Haiba lying to the side, sleeping. She nudged him, and he looked up, his eyes flickering open. "W-what – what is it?"

"Haiba, come on," replied Nala. "Simba's ran away, and we've got to find him before he does something stupid."

"But I was just having the loveliest dream about Simba kissing me—" Haiba stopped midsentence. "Actually, never mind," he said, getting to his paws and following Nala out of the den.

Nala hurried over to the edge of Pride Rock, quickly scanning the vast surroundings of the Pride Lands. "Okay, so if I were Simba, where would I be?"

"Aren't you just like him?" Haiba asked, rubbing his eyes as he joined Nala by her side. "You should know straight away, shouldn't you? It's like you're... connected. Wait a sec, why am I figuring this out for you?"

"Thanks, anyway," said Nala, continuing to look down on the lands that she would one day rule over with Simba – that is, if he was still alive. "Doesn't look like he's around. Jeez, he sure knows how to run off quick, doesn't he?"

"All right, where do you think he is?" Haiba asked. "You don't think he's found another Uchoyo Diamond and decided to try and enslave us all again, do you?"

Nala shook her head. "I don't think so. He's just angry with his mother. Last time he was angry with me."

"Is there a difference?" said Haiba, raising an eyebrow at her. "I mean, it's still one person he's angry at."

"It's *me*, Haiba," replied Nala. "And Simba cares about me a lot. Plus, we don't normally argue as much."

"So why would he go and not tell us?" Haiba wondered. "Maybe he's run off to his secret other life at the top of a distant mountain."

"You have a very weird imagination," Nala said. "But then again, so do I. Somehow, I don't think Simba is living two different lives. He's just mad, so he's running off. He always does that."

"We might never see him again," said Haiba. "He's probably met two highly irritating animals and is now living with them in the jungle. We probably won't see him for a couple of years or so."

"Yeah, Simba tried to do something like that before," Nala told him. "And I almost ended up getting my soul drained by an insane meerkat and a stupid warthog. But I don't think Simba would try the same thing again. He's too smart for that."

Nala turned around, and made her way back down Pride Rock. "Okay, so we know two things. One: Simba's ran away. Two: we don't know where Simba has run away to."

"Well, I'd say that we're pretty much doomed," Haiba concluded. "There we go. What a shame. End of story." He pulled Nala towards him. "Let's get married!"

Nala slapped Haiba on the face, sending him to the ground. "Ow!" he cried out in pain, a paw held to his cheek. "Hey... wait a second..." He looked up at Nala, smiling. "You said yesterday that you only slapped Simba, which means..." A grin spread across his face. "Our bond is strengthening. We're developing a relationship!"

"There isn't a relationship!" Nala exclaimed. "It's not happening, not ever! How desperate are you?"

"Well..." Haiba looked out across the Pride Lands, narrowing his eyes. "I quite like the look of that elephant over there..." He grinned. "Weight isn't exactly an issue for a guy like me."

Nala shook her head, rolling her eyes and walking away. "Come on, Haiba. You can go and have your weird fantasies later."

"But I like my weird fantasies!" Haiba protested, following her. "It's what makes me who I am!"

"Yeah – that's the problem," Nala remarked. "Haiba, if it wasn't for me, where would you be?"

"In the den – sleeping," Haiba replied.

"No, no, no. I mean mentally, where would you be?" Nala asked.

Haiba nodded. "Oh, right – I'd be marrying myself. I'm that handsome," he said with a chuckle.

Nala sighed. "This isn't turning out to be a very good day, is it?" she asked, a disappointed look in her eyes. "And I thought nothing could top yesterday's incident with Froggy the... frog."

"There're plenty of worse things," said Haiba, his tone serious. "What about when Hago did all those... *things* to you?"

Nala winced, trying to block out agonising memories. "D-don't say that, Haiba," she stammered. "I don't want to remember it." She put a paw to her temple. "It hurts."

"So where would Simba go?" Haiba wondered. "He can't have too many hiding places – unless there's something you're not telling me."

"He likes to go to the tree where we first met," Nala told him. "He does that whenever he's having 'personal issues'. It helps him to think." She smiled at Haiba. "And I can't say I blame him. It's a good memory. Meeting your first – and best – friend."

"So would he be there now?" Haiba asked. "Cause I didn't see anything when we were at Pride Rock."

"Me neither," Nala agreed.

"Well, I've got an idea," Haiba said. "Why don't we search the jungle?"

"Nah, that's stupid," replied Nala. "Wait a minute..." A grin spread across her face. "I have an idea!"

"Gee, I wonder what it could be," Haiba said, rolling his eyes.

"We're going to search the jungle!" Nala exclaimed.

"That's what I said—"

"Come on!" Nala broke into a run. "I bet we can get there before Simba! We've got to find him before he wrecks his whole life!"

Haiba followed her. "I still think that we should get married," Haiba told her. "Why don't we start a pride of our own?"

"Haiba, one more word about us getting married and I'm going to send you flying back into the Grand Lands," Nala threatened.

Haiba shut his mouth. "Received and understood."

***Chapter 4*: Chapter 4: The Royal Mystery**

Chapter Four: The Royal Mystery

"Young master, why have you dragged us all the way out to this sinister place?" Zazu asked, nervously looking around the jungle surroundings. "I'm afraid don't quite understand your reasoning."

"Just relax, Zazu," replied Simba. "It's only the jungle. You've been here before – when Hago and Scar took over the kingdom. You got so scared that you flew all the way out here." He chuckled. "Just proves how much of a scaredy-cat you are."

"I'd prefer that you didn't call me hurtful names like that," Zazu told him, sounding offended. "My self-esteem isn't what it used to be. I blame those monkeys for tickling me senselessly during that whole Royal Challenge hubbub."

"Well, you should have been more careful when sorting out the Pride Lands law," Simba replied. "If you *had*, then you wouldn't have gotten tortured for hours, and I wouldn't have had to fight off the most annoying cub I've ever met."

"I'll admit I overlooked that one little obscure law," Zazu agreed. "But I'll remind you that both your father and I were very new to this royalty business at the time, so I would say it's rather excusable."

"New?" said Simba, raising an eyebrow. "I thought you'd been doing the ol' Banana-Beak routine for more than a thousand years, Zazu."

"A thousand years?" Zazu exclaimed, chuckling. "Just how old do you think I am, young master?"

"Oh, I don't know. How many lions are there in the world?" Simba joked, prompting Zazu to look very unimpressed.

"Ha-ha, very funny," he said sarcastically. "Maybe if your common sense was as good as your jokes then you might shape up to be a better King some day."

"Okay, then, Zazu. How old are you?" Simba asked, actually not knowing the answer. Come to think of it, it would be a bit interesting to find out...

"I am but five years old, Simba," replied Zazu. "Your father has been the King for little over three years, and I became his majordomo at around the same time, which was actually when I was very young. Contrary to your belief, I am *not* thousands of years old! I'm barely into my adult stage!"

"Wow." Simba looked quite shocked. "Five years, huh? That's only four years older than me." He scratched his head. "Weird. So you weren't working for the King before my Dad?"

"Me? Well, of course not. I was only a child at the time of King Ahadi's reign. And I remember it *vividly*." Zazu didn't look too pleased at his childhood memories. They weren't exactly pleasant.

"So who was King Ahadi, anyway?" Simba asked.

He didn't know anything about his granddad. He had died a few years before he was born. No one really spoke about him, and Simba could only assume that this was for a bad reason. Probably a very bad reason.

But it couldn't be that bad, could it?

"King Ahadi?" Zazu fluttered down onto Simba's shoulder, and shuddered. "I don't think you'd want to know about him, Simba. The history of the Pride Lands before your father's reign wasn't very pleasant. To be honest, it was quite dismal."

"Well, surely you can tell me," Simba said, giving Zazu an innocent smile. "I am a very responsible cub."

Zazu laughed. "You?" he exclaimed, his eyes widening. "Simba, name one thing that makes you responsible."

"I've saved the kingdom from certain death several times," Simba responded. "I think that's responsible enough, Zazu. Why does no one ever realise that I'm the best thing that's ever happened to them? Now tell me what was so bad about King Ahadi."

"I can't, Simba," Zazu insisted. "It's forbidden."

"What is that supposed to mean?" Simba asked. "How can it be forbidden to talk about the former King?"

"Your father made it a law," Zazu explained. "All Pride Lands inhabitants are forbidden to talk about King Ahadi and the horrors he caused for the kingdom. Why do you think your father rarely ever mentions him? And who do you think gave that ugly monster Scar his name?"

"So no one is allowed to talk about this King Ahadi?" Simba presumed. "Not even me – even though I'm the Prince?"

Zazu shook his head. "No, young master. The tale is simply too harrowing for a young cub like yourself to know. It could give you nightmares for an infinite number of months."

"I've already been down that path, Zazu," Simba told him. "Trust me; I hold the record for nightmares. A few of them actually involve you. There was this one where your face melted, and then your brain exploded all over the place!"

"How enlightening," Zazu remarked, a frown on his long beak. "Now can we dispense with all this unpleasantness and perhaps focus on the lighter side of life?"

"Could you repeat that in English?" Simba asked, hardly understanding a word that Zazu had just said to him.

Zazu sighed. "I want to change the subject, young master. Now, tell me this. Where are we going? I think, as your companion, that I deserve to know."

"And I deserve to know about King Ahadi," Simba retorted, a sly smile on his face. "If you won't tell me about him, then I won't tell you where we're going."

"That's blackmail!" Zazu cried. "You can't do that to a respectable hornbill such as myself! Why, if we were in the Pride Lands, then you would be severely punished for such a horrid action!"

Simba stopped, staring at Zazu in disbelief. "Do you just talk like that all of the time? It's really starting to freak me out."

"I was brought up to be civilised," Zazu informed the Prince. "My parents saw to that. It was very necessary at the time – what with the state of life at the time and all. I needed to be proper."

"So where are your parents now?" Simba asked, grinning at Zazu. "Probably lying in the bottom of a rhino's stomach." He chuckled. "Looks like the way *they* talked didn't get them very—"

He saw the look Zazu was giving him, and then frowned, looking down at the ground. "Sorry," he said. "I – I didn't mean —"

"I know, Simba," Zazu interrupted. "My parents have been dead ever since I was a child. My only ever friend was your father. He took me in."

"What happened?" Simba asked, curious. "How did they...?"

Zazu looked down at the inquisitive cub. "I think that's a story for another time, don't you?"

Simba opened his mouth to protest, when he heard a loud sound.

The sound of someone screaming at the top of their voice.

AN: Secrets, mysteries, cliffhangers. What could all this be leading up to? I guess you'll find out soon enough. Maybe after the next two billion cliffhangers!

Chapter 5: Chapter 5: The Mungu Pride

AN: Simba really doesn't get what he deserves, does he? He's always thought of as immature. It's about time someone actually worshipped him for the god he is. Wait a second...

Simba Pridelands: Tama and Tojo? The scream didn't come from them, but they might just pop up by the end of this story. Keep an eye out...

kora22: Excellent point. Well done! Maybe Simba should bring that up, huh?

Chapter Five: The Mungu Pride

Simba and Zazu gasped at the sound of the scream, looking around frantically to see where it was coming from. "I knew this was a bad idea!" Zazu cried. His eyes were wide with fear. "Nana Zazu always said there'd be days like this!"

"I don't think this is the right time to be telling me what your family said, Zazu!" said Simba, a worried look in his eyes.

He knew what to look for when danger was nearby. A very loud scream was almost a certainty that Simba was at least three metres away from a deadly situation. "We might be in trouble!"

"Trouble?" Zazu became even more terrified. "Danger? Threats? Psychopathic killers with a hunger for hornbills like me?" He shouldn't have gone. He knew that. And now he would end up regretting it for the rest of his life – and that wouldn't be very long, by the looks of things.

"I don't know," Simba answered honestly, his eyes darting left and right. "It could be anything, Zazu. I can't read minds. What kind of a cub do you think I am?"

"A very irresponsible, immature, irritating little one!" Zazu shot back, furious that he was mere moments away from a painful death. "Now we're both going to end up eaten by a ten foot tall monster!"

"Maybe we were just hearing things," Simba said hopefully. "Maybe it was all just in our head. Maybe nothing wrong is going to happen at all." He chuckled nervously. "Yeah. That's it."

Another deafening scream was heard, as a fully grown lion jumped down in front of Simba and Zazu, causing them to jump back, screaming at the top of their voices!

"*Please eat the cub first!*" Zazu pleaded, a desperate look in his eyes. "I'm just skin and bones! He's a lion cub! He's full of meat!"

"See?" said Simba accusingly, glaring at Zazu. "You *are* a coward! I knew it! Ever since you tried to—"

"Who are you?" the lion demanded, staring at them with his hard brown eyes. He had golden-brown fur, with a long dark-brown mane. He didn't look very friendly. "And what are you doing in the territory of the Mungu Pride?"

"The Mungu Pride?" Simba exclaimed, raising an eyebrow. "What kind of a name for a pride is that?"

The lion leant in towards Simba, staring into his auburn eyes. "*Our* name," he said, actually managing to sound threatening. "Is there some kind of... *problem* with that?" he asked the terrified Prince of the Pride Lands.

Simba chuckled nervously. "Uh... no. I meant that... it was cool!" He grinned. "Yeah! Cool! Very, very cool! No problems from me! No complaints at all!"

The lion smiled. "Good," he said, still sounding very scary. "Now answer my questions, you infidels. Who are you?"

"Infidels?" Zazu frowned, folding his wings, looking unimpressed. "How very rude. Do you kiss your mother with that mouth?"

The lion exploded with anger, grabbing Zazu and holding him up to his snarling face. "What did you say to me?" he growled.

Me and my big beak, he thought. "I apologise sincerely. It won't ever happen again. Please don't kill me. I stress the word 'please'."

The lion growled again, dropping Zazu to the ground.

"Nice going, Zazu," Simba remarked, watching Zazu as he climbed to his feet.

"You've got five seconds to identify yourselves before I tear your throats out," the lion told them, sounding like he would make good on his threat.

"I'm Simba," he introduced himself. "Prince Simba. To be exact, Prince of the Pride Lands. And—"

"Worth keeping alive," Zazu cut in. "I'd say very worth keeping alive."

"Zazu, let me handle this," Simba said, gritting his teeth.

"You? Nonsense! I am the King's official royal representative! I will be handling all matters regarding—"

Simba grabbed Zazu by the throat, stopping him from speaking. "Excuse my good... *friend*, Zazu," said Simba, finding it hard to call Zazu that. "He's just a little crazy after being out in the hot sun all day. So, who are you?"

"I am Kiongozi," the lion introduced himself. "Leader of the Mungu Pride. Now what are you doing here?"

Simba dropped Zazu to the ground. "Oh, we were just..." Simba had to think quickly for a reason. "Passing through. There's nothing to worry about. We'll be out of your way in a second."

Simba tried to walk past Kiongozi, but he pushed him back. "Hold on," the scary lion said. "You're not going anywhere."

Simba gulped nervously. "W-what do you mean?" he stammered, confused. "Is there s-some k-kind of p-p-problem?"

"No one passes through our territory freely," Kiongozi informed him. "They must be assessed by the rest of the pride before they're allowed to get through. If you're deemed fit to walk through our lands then you're free to go."

Simba had a worried frown on his face. "And what happens if we're *not* fit to walk through your lands? Do you send us back the other way or something?"

"No," replied Kiongozi, a murderous glint in his eyes. "We *kill* you. It's the law, and everyone has to abide by it – *even* travellers."

"But we're not travellers!" Zazu protested, panicking madly. "I only agreed to come here because that foolish, arrogant cub here talked me into it! Can't you just let me go and murder him instead?"

"I'll let you know right now, little bird, that your assessment has already begun, and that it isn't going too well," Kiongozi informed him. "One of our laws here is that we respect our friends. And right now, I'm not seeing any respect."

"I'm not his friend!" Zazu told him. "I'm just his babysitter!"

Kiongozi sighed, turning around and shaking his head. "Follow me. The Mungu Pride awaits."

Simba started slowly walking, wondering just how horrible the Mungu Pride was. *I bet they're an entire pride full of killers*, he thought. *We're dead. And it's all Zazu's fault. Can't he keep that beak of his shut for once?*

Zazu landed on Simba's shoulder. "What are we going to do?" he whispered, fearful that any minute now he was going to be torn into tiny pieces. "You'd better figure something out. It's your fault we got into this awful mess. Just wait until your father hears about this!"

Simba glared at Zazu furiously. "If you mention *any* of this to my dad, then *I'll* kill you," he threatened. "Now shut up, and let me figure a way out of this. In the meantime, just keep that beak of yours shut."

Zazu frowned. "And another thing, the way you speak to your elders is absolutely disgusting. Why, in my day—"

"That's it." Simba couldn't stand any more. "He can have you. I'm getting out of this myself. If you want a way out, then you're going to do it alone. You're just so ungrateful – just like everyone else back home. You're all jerks."

"Fine by me!" Zazu shut his beak, folding his wings. "Very fine indeed..."

Chapter 6: Chapter 6: Rule for Ever and Ever

Chapter Six: Rule for Ever and Ever

Simba and Zazu were brought to a large clearing in the middle of the jungle. They could feel the intense, burning heat from the sun above them. Having been walking around in the shade of the jungle for a few hours, the sun made the two feel like they were on fire.

Simba looked around, finding himself surprised by what was all the way out here.

Some kind of small kingdom had been erected in the middle of the clearing. Caves were scattered around, with several lions and lionesses wandering around the place. None of them looked very friendly. Simba thought that if he bumped into one of them by accident, then he would be reduced to a pile of bones within seconds.

"This is where we reside," Kiongozi informed them. "We live, eat and work here. It's not like your conventional pride. Everyone works equally, doing their part. You might lose a few points in the assessment for being a Prince. We don't take very kindly to people ordering others around."

"It's not like that," Simba protested. "And besides, you're the leader. Isn't it the same thing?"

"I simply provide guidance and a helping paw," Kiongozi told them. "Other than that, everyone works by themselves to secure a decent life. We believe that's for the best."

"I think it's horrendous," Zazu muttered. "How uncoordinated and... frankly, untidy."

"If you talk about this pride in such a way again then I shall boil you alive," Kiongozi threatened, before chuckling. "It doesn't really matter. You're going to end up dead anyway."

"You hear that?" said Simba, smiling at Zazu, satisfied. "Looks like you're in trouble, Zazu. I wonder how you're going to get out of it."

Zazu chuckled nervously. "Well... Simba, I've been thinking, and have come to a decision: we should put aside our difference, and work together to get out of this horrid mess."

"Nope," replied Simba, with a shake of his head. "I told you. You're on your own this time, Zazu. You simply don't deserve my help."

"And in what sense don't I deserve it?" Zazu asked. "I'm a hornbill in distress. I believe that warrants a daring rescue!"

"You're just... never pleased," Simba responded. "In fact, *none* of you are ever pleased. Not Mom. Not Dad. *Definitely* not you. I do so much to help people, but no one ever appreciates it. So *that's* why you don't deserve my help, Zazu. *That's* why."

Zazu noticed that Simba looked very upset upon saying that. It was as if the cub actually meant it. "Simba... You... I—"

"Just shut up," Simba interrupted. "I've had enough of you, Zazu. I've had enough of you all..."

Kiongozi stamped his forepaws on the ground, gaining the attention of the pride. "Brothers! Sisters! Gather round!" he called. "We have an assessment to make!"

The lions and lionesses started muttering amongst each other, interested by this new development. At the Mungu Pride, one of the best things that could happen was an assessment of people trying to get through. It always ended in an execution.

Always.

"An assessment?" one lion said eagerly, stepping forward. "Who are we going to be assessing? Are they weak? Will they be torn open easily?"

"Calm down, Kiume," replied Kiongozi. "You'll get your daily killing soon enough. These new arrivals have practically sealed their doom!"

"They look a little weak," Kiume pointed out, staring unimpressively at Simba and Zazu. "Come to think of it, that little cub over there looks like—"

Kiume gasped loudly, recognising Simba's appearance. "Kiongozi!" he cried, pointing at Simba. "Look! Look! It's... it's—"

Kiongozi narrowed his eyes in confusion. "Kiume, what are you rattling on about? I know you're excited, but this isn't really the time to—"

"It's God!" Kiume exclaimed, shaking a little bit. "*The God! Our God!*" He turned around to face the rest of the pride, a grin on his face. "Can't you see? He looks exactly like him!"

Kiongozi eyed Simba up and down. "Hmm..." he said, a thoughtful look on his face as he observed Simba carefully. "I'll admit that the resemblance is familiar, but I see no proof to suggest that he *is* the God."

"Wait, wait, wait," said Simba, waving his paws in the air. "Who is 'the God'?"

"He doesn't remember!" Kiume said, his grin widening, almost dancing around with excitement. "That proves it! The God – when reborn again – will have no recollection of the great person who he is!"

"The God is who we worship," Kiongozi informed Simba. "And my companion Kiume here seems to believe that you are him. He is said to possess great power, and we lead us all on the path to righteousness. He is the only person fit to become..." He hesitated, as if disliking the next word he was about to say. "Our king."

"The path to righteousness'?" Zazu repeated. "That just sounds ridiculous!"

"Don't you mock the God!" Kiume cried, grabbing Simba by the shoulders and clutching him tightly to his chest. "Don't worry," he said to the cub. "We'll look after you now."

"We still don't know if he actually *is* the God, yet," Kiongozi said.

"So let's trial him," Kiume retorted, not letting go of Simba, afraid that the cub might vanish out of thin air if he released him. "For one day. That way we'll know if he was the god or not."

"But what about that bird?" one lion asked, pointing at Zazu. "What do we do with him?"

"I can take care of that," Kiongozi replied. "There are many rivers nearby. I will take great pleasure in drowning him."

"What?" Zazu's eyes were wide with horror. "Oh, you can't do that to me! I'm too young!"

Kiongozi roughly grabbed Zazu by the throat, and started strangling him. He would wait until the hornbill passed out. That way he wouldn't have to suffer any more complaints.

"Be silent," Kiongozi ordered. "And this might just be a little less painful."

Zazu choked. "Please..." he gaged. "I don't... want... to die..." He looked pleadingly at Simba for help.

Simba sighed, seeing the honest fear in Zazu's eyes. No matter how much he disliked Zazu, he just couldn't let that happen to him.

"Let him go!" he ordered, taking a step towards Kiongozi. "Let him go right now!"

Kiongozi stared at Simba. "You're the God," he said, and then let go of Zazu, letting him drop to the ground. "Maybe you *are* him, after all. I've never seen someone so passionate before."

"I told you!" Kiume exclaimed. "He's going to be our leader for ever and ever!"

Simba stared at Kiume, and then, he smiled. "For ever and ever, eh?" he said, a smile spreading across his face. "I like the sound of that."

"Excuse me?" said Zazu, fluttering down onto Simba's shoulders. "Simba, we have to leave right now. Your parents will be *awfully* worried about you."

"There's no need to thank me," Simba retorted. "Zazu, there's nothing left for me at the Pride Lands. We can stay here for ever, Zazu! These people think I'm their god, so they'll do anything I say."

"But what about your family?" Zazu asked. "What about Nala?"

"Nala will find me here," Simba said confidently. "And then she can live with us. And as for Mom and Dad... they don't care about me anymore. They'll probably be glad to be rid of me. Besides, I've got *this* pride now!"

Zazu frowned. *I don't like the sound of this... Not one bit.*

AN: Simba the God! What a title! I'd *kill* for a name like that! But as I'm sure you've all learned, it all seems too good to be true. Simba can't possibly stay a god for ever...

Can he?

I'll leave you to ponder on Simba's choice. Not that it ties in with the choices Nala will have to make. Or does it...?

Chapter 7: Chapter 7: On the Trail

AN: I know you're all waiting for the certain appearance of two certain cubs. Just read and you'll have your treat.

Kblade: Hey! It's been a while since you last reviewed. Yep. Kiongozi means 'leader' in Swahili. Didn't know you'd used it in a previous fan fic of yours, though. Great minds think alike, eh?

kora22: Nope, Haiba knows nothing of the Mungu Pride. But there is something about him you should look out for in this chapter. Maybe you can spot it...

Chapter Seven: On the Trail

"You know, when I said Simba was fast, I didn't mean *this* fast," Haiba said, as he and Nala trekked through the jungle. They had been walking through the seemingly identical plants and trees for hours now, and they had seen no sign of Simba. Not even the tiniest glimpse. "Are you sure he would have come this far?"

"Yes," replied Nala. "Of course he would. He wants to get as far away from his family as possible. They're just a bunch of big meanies to him. They don't appreciate all the things he does for us."

"Okay, I'll admit they're a little... cruel, but wouldn't they have a reason for it?" asked Haiba. "There's always a reason for something, isn't there?"

Haiba didn't know Simba's parents all that well – having only just settled in to life at the Pride Lands, so he had no idea how their minds worked. He didn't realise how upset they made Simba when they refused to acknowledge that he had done something good. And that occurred a lot.

So Haiba was pretty much stumped on this one. He didn't know what to say. He just couldn't decide on who was right: Simba or his parents? "Haiba, when you've known Simba for as long as I have – and that's pretty long – then you can see when he's wrong, and you can see when he's right," Nala told him. "Do you get what I'm saying?"

"I... guess," Haiba replied, scratching his head. "I'm still feeling a little confused, though. Could you explain this a bit more to me?"

"His parents are wrong," Nala explained, "but they just won't admit that. They think he just throws up straight into trouble!"

"He *does*, doesn't he?" said Haiba. "It's what I know him best for. If you want to endanger your life, then Simba is the cub you go to."

It was true that Simba often got Nala and Haiba into danger. But it wasn't exactly like they were protesting against it. They knew the risks, and never disagreed when danger came into the equation. They were a team, and they were going to stay that way for ever – fighting against evil until the day they died.

"We are the ones who get *ourselves* into danger, Haiba," Nala corrected him. "Simba may be the leader, but we know what we're getting into, don't we? It's not like he... *forces* us into trouble, is it? We *agree*. We don't care."

"That's not what his parents say," replied Haiba. "I mean, Simba is pretty reckless." He shrugged. "I don't know. Maybe they're right."

"I can't believe I'm hearing this!" Nala exclaimed, a shocked expression on her face. "Are you going to believe... *rats* like them, or honest bugs like me and Simba?"

"I don't know *who* to believe!" Haiba replied, his eyes widening. "It's all very confusing for me! It's this jungle heat." He looked around, grabbing the fur on top of his head. "It's getting to me. I'm going crazy! Help me, Nala! Help me!"

Nala slapped Haiba again, causing him to fall to the ground. "Yes!" he cried triumphantly, a grin forming on his face. "I *knew* you'd do that! I give it five more weeks and you'll be all over me!"

"I'd rather die," said Nala, a frown forming on her face.

She just couldn't understand Haiba sometimes. She assumed that he had some kind of a crush on her, but it was just... creepy, she had to admit. She wouldn't ever fall in love with Haiba. She liked him as a friend – as some kind of quirky brother – but that was it. She harboured no romantic feelings for him. She just hoped that one day this wouldn't ruin the neat little family she had...

"Oh, all right, fine," Haiba said, a little smile on his face. "Maybe I should wait until the afterlife, then."

Nala sighed, rolling her eyes. "Come on," she urged, gesturing for him to follow her. "We need to find Simba – before he hurts himself. For all we know he could be sinking in a pit full of quicksand right now. He could be lying on his back in the middle of the desert, *starving* slowly to death!"

"Aren't you exaggerating this just the tiniest bit?" Haiba asked. "Don't you think Simba can take care of himself for a couple of hours?"

"Of course he can," Nala responded. "It's just that he can do stupid things when he gets angry. And I've gotta be there to make sure he doesn't put himself in danger. I worry a lot about him."

"Do you think he worries about *you*?" Haiba asked, causing Nala to stop dead in her tracks. "I mean, he did just run away. It wasn't like he even said goodbye or anything."

She slowly turned around. "What are you talking about?" she asked. "Simba *loves* me! He's only just running away because he's angry."

"Are you sure?" Haiba questioned. "For all we know, he could have run away to a far-off place, and never ever wants to see us again."

Nala seemed to consider that possibility for a few moments, but then shook her head, denying it. "No," she stated, continuing to walk. "He wouldn't do that. He's just confused. *Very* confused."

Haiba stayed in place for a few moments, watching as Nala walked away. His eyes flashed a sinister, glowing red for a few moments. He then shook his head, as if something had invaded his mind, before following her.

"He's gotta be around here somewhere," Nala said to herself, keeping a careful look out for Simba's golden-brown fur and handsome auburn eyes. "We're, like, halfway through the jungle. Would he really go this far?"

"We could always ask," Haiba suggested. "You know – ask if anyone has seen him passing through. You never know."

"That's a good idea," Nala agreed. "But just who the heck are we going to ask around here? It doesn't seem like anyone has lived around here for miles."

Suddenly, a rustling sound was heard from nearby.

"Tojo, stop it!" a voice cried. "Pulling on it is only going to make things worse!"

"But I can't get it out, Tama!" exclaimed another voice. "It's way too hard!"

"Simba, I still think we really should return to the Pride Lands," Zazu insisted, an urgent look on his face. "I can see you're having a good time, but this is just ridiculous!"

Simba was having the time of his life right now. He was sat in a shallow pool, having his shoulders massaged by a rather attractive lioness. "In what way is it ridiculous, Zazu?" Simba asked the hornbill. "Life just doesn't get much better than this."

"I beg to differ," replied Zazu. "I find the only suitable home for me *and* you is the kingdom of the Pride Lands – not some pride with a pushy attitude and—"

"Now, now, Zazu," Simba interrupted, giving him a warning stare. "You don't want to go blabbing bad things about our new home. It might not make my people very happy."

Simba gestured around the pool, where all the lions and lionesses of the Mungu Pride had gathered round, to watch who they believed to be their god. "And you don't want to upset them, do you, Zazu?"

Zazu looked around, and became nervous at the sight of the Mungu Pride glaring angrily at him. "Oh... no. Not at all, young master. Maybe we should stay here after all."

Simba smiled. "Good. Let's make sure it stays that way – otherwise the God just might have to punish you. I saved your life before, Zazu, but I can take it away in a second. You don't want that now – *do* you?"

Zazu shook his head, an innocent smile on his beak. "You may do as you please, young master – so long as I don't end up in any unfortunate accidents."

"Don't worry," said Simba. "I'll make sure nothing happens to you. After all, you work for me now, Zazu, and I need you in good shape."

"Work for *you*?" Zazu was outraged. "Do you think I'm insane? I only work for the great King Mufasa!"

Simba shook his head, frowning. "Oh, no, Zazu. Times have changed. You have to do what I say from now on. It's either that or I throw you in the Dark Cave of Perpetual Suffering. And I hear they have tickling monkeys there now..."

Zazu shuddered. "As you wish, young master Simba. I shall..." He sighed, feeling like he'd hit a brand-new low. "Work for you for the foreseeable future."

"Perfect!" Simba exclaimed, a grin forming on his face. "We're going to be very happy here. Especially once Nala arrives. That way I'll never be upset again!"

"How do you even know she's going to find you?" Zazu asked. "What makes you think she's even started searching for you yet?"

"It's Nala, Zazu. Of course she'll be looking for me," Simba assured her. "And if not, then I'll just have to get her myself."

I hope she gets here, too, Zazu thought to himself. *She's the only cub who'll be able to change his mind.*

To say that Tama wasn't happy was an understatement. She was *furious*! Not furious with a person, but furious with this jungle! It was stupid! It was mean! It was causing her an infinite amount of trouble!

So why had she decided to live here? Because she loved it! The jungle was great! The jungle was wonderful! The jungle was beautiful! She had never ever lived in such an amazing place before in her life!

But sometimes it could be stressful. Right now, it was one of those stressful times. She was stuck in quite a tricky situation, and she didn't quite know how to get out.

And, to her dismay, neither did Tojo.

"Look, just try and rip it with your claws!" Tama shouted, turning her head to look at Tojo.

The two of them were dangling from the branch of a tree, tangled up in a seemingly infinite amount of thick, green vines. Needless to say, they were having a lot of difficulty escaping. "I'm trying!" Tojo shouted back. "But I told you before: my claws are underdeveloped!"

"I thought that was just a fancy word you liked using!" Tama responded. "You never told me it actually *meant* something!"

"Well, it *does*, Tama," Tojo informed her. "My claws aren't very strong, and even if they *were* then I doubt they'd be able to cut through these thick vines."

"Then bite through them," Tama instructed. "Surely your *teeth* can't be underdeveloped too, can they?"

Tojo tried munching on one of the vines, but it was no use. "They're still... too... thick," he said, before letting go of the vine. "Ow. That really hurt my mouth." He looked at Tama. "Wait a second, why can't *you* try and break through the vines?"

"Uh..." Tama chuckled nervously. "No real reason. I just thought you wanted to be my brave hero."

"I thought I was your brave hero anyway," said Tojo, feeling a little hurt on the inside. "Even if I don't show it with my complete lack of physical strength. But I'm sure my *mental* strength more than makes up for it."

Tama giggled, and kissed Tojo on the cheek. "Of course you're my hero, Tojo," she told him. "I wouldn't have it any other way."

Tojo's cheeks turned red, and he giggled quietly. "Thanks, Tama," he said. "Y-you're my hero, too – if that makes any sense."

Tama smiled. "It makes *perfect* sense, Tojo."

"Hey, are you in some kind of trouble?" asked a voice from below the two cubs.

Tama and Tojo looked down to see Nala and Haiba on the ground. "Oh great, it's Prince Cheesy," Tojo said, rolling his eyes upon seeing Haiba.

Haiba grinned. "Nice to see you, too," he remarked. "What are you doing all the way up there? Trying to impress your girlfriend?"

"Haiba, be nice," said Nala, giving him a little nudge on the side. "How did you get stuck up there?"

"It's a long story," replied Tojo. "But we would be very grateful if you could help us down. As long as you don't want some kind of reward."

"Well..." Haiba walked over to an ancient tree, which was attached to the branch they were dangling from. "It just so happens that I know a Grand Lands trick. A trick that may be of some use to you."

"So what is it?" Tama asked.

"You see, you have to..." Haiba started patting different parts of the tree with a paw. "Find the weakest point of the tree," he continued, before his face lit up. "Aha!" he exclaimed. "Now, brace yourselves!"

Haiba gave a certain part of the tree an almighty whack, causing Tama and Tojo to tumble to the ground.

Thump! Tama landed on top of Tojo. "Whoops," said Tama, looking down at Tojo. "Sorry, Tojo. I didn't mean to crush you."

"Apology accepted," Tojo said in a wheezy voice. "Now could you please get off me? My lungs are starting to fail."

Tama rose to her paws, smiling at Nala and Haiba. "Thanks," she told them. "I don't know what we would have done if you two didn't show up. If there's anything we can do for you, just—"

"Well—" Haiba began, before Nala clamped a paw over his mouth, stopping him from speaking.

"Actually, there *is* something you can do for us," Nala cut in. "You haven't seen Simba hanging around nearby, have you?"

"Simba?" Tama looked at Tojo, and then grinned. "Ha! I knew I was right! That cub who walked past us *was* Simba!"

"Wait, he walked past here and didn't even try to help you?" asked Nala, confused.

"He seemed to be a bit caught up in a conversation with some bird guy," Tama explained. "But I saw him head..." She pointed forwards. "That way."

Nala looked in that direction. "Great," she said, frowning. "Now I've gotta walk even further." She pulled Haiba away. "Come on, Haiba. We're going."

"Well, it was fun seeing you, Tojo," Haiba told him. "I'm sure we'll be seeing each other again real soon."

"Uh... yeah," said Tojo, narrowing his eyes. "Whatever that means." He waved at the two as he left. "Bye."

Tama pulled Tojo up to her face. "So, Tojo, since I won that bet, I think I deserve a little reward."

"Does it involve kissing?" Tojo asked.

"Oh, yeah!"

"So how long are you planning to stay here for?" Zazu asked, hoping that this was just a phase Simba would grow out of. Surely he couldn't want to stay in this odd pride for and ever?

"I'm staying here for ever and ever," Simba replied, causing Zazu's face to fall. "It's so great here. I'm their god. For once, I'm starting to get some respect! And that's all I've really ever wanted."

"I don't think your family are going to approve of this," said Zazu. "You're going to be in serious trouble when they find out. Maybe if we turn back now then I just might be able to work this whole mess out."

"I don't think so, Zazu," said Simba, shaking his head. "I don't see why you can't see what I see, you see?"

"No, I can't," Zazu agreed. "For a furry little cub, you perplex me to no end, Simba. I just can't figure you out. It seems that only your closest friends *can*."

"Speaking of which," said Simba, a smile spreading across his face. "You might be interested to see who's shown up."

Nala and Haiba were being dragged towards the pool Simba was sat in by Kiongozi and Kiume. "Hey, watch the fur, pal!" Haiba threatened angrily. "I didn't grow this all for nothing!"

"Is this how you treat *all* your guests?" said Nala, glaring at Kiongozi threateningly. "If the answer is 'yes', then I doubt you get many!"

"Be quiet, girlie," Kiongozi snarled, before signalling to Kiume. They then both threw Nala and Haiba at Simba. "Here you go, God. We caught them snooping around the territory. What should we do with them? I recommend a painful execution... by drowning."

"That won't be necessary," Simba told them, before looking at Nala. "Hey, Nala. Nice to see you found me at my new home."

Nala was taken aback by this. "Your new home? Simba, what the heck are you talking about? Just what are you doing all the way out here?"

"I'm living here now, Nala," Simba explained. "Did you hear the way my mom was talking about me? I've had enough of them! They don't appreciate me one single bit! So now I'm staying here, where I am recognised as a god."

"A god?" Haiba was surprised. "It's amazing what you can accomplish in a few hours, isn't it?"

"Wait a second," said Kiongozi. "You mean to say that you *recognise* these people?"

"Of course I do," Simba replied. "They're my best friends."

"That's odd..." Kiongozi had a suspicious look on his face. "Because we don't know the God to have friends." He then grabbed Simba by the throat, holding him up to his face. "Considering you were supposed to have only recently been reborn!"

Simba chuckled nervously. "Oops. Guess I should have kept my big mouth shut, huh?"

Kiongozi unsheathed his claws. "Prepare to die," he said, ready to tear Simba's throat open. His pride's reputation had been tarnished by this untrustworthy trespasser. And now he would pay for it with his life.

"How did I know this was all going to end in tragedy?" said Zazu, looking up at the sky.

Haiba pointed at Zazu. "Hey, what's the bird doing here?"

"Excuse me, but that bird has a name!" Zazu yelled angrily. "And there are more pressing matters than that – like the welfare of the Prince!"

"Yes," said Simba, as he tried to wriggle away from Kiongozi, who had his claws tightly around Simba's throat. "Like my... Uh... What Zazu said."

"Then I would suggest Attack Plan Twenty-Two," said Haiba.

"What's Attack Plan Twenty-Two?" Nala asked.

"Pounce at the enemy and tear him to shreds," Haiba replied, before pouncing at Kiongozi, crying out at the top of his voice.

Kiongozi was taken by surprise, and dropped Simba in an effort to dodge Haiba.

But it was too late. Haiba landed on Kiongozi's back, extended his claws, and slashed the back of his neck.

Kiongozi snarled, looking to Kiume for help. "Kiume, help me!"

Kiume shrugged. "Sorry, Kiongozi, but I ain't going near that cub. He is one crazy guy!"

Haiba slashed Kiongozi across the back. "It's only gonna get worse, you know," he told the lion.

Kiongozi growled, wrenching Haiba from his back and throwing him violently to the ground. "For *you*, maybe," he retorted, before stamping the ground with his forepaws, gaining the attention of his fellow lions and lionesses. "Brothers! Sisters!" he called. "Hunt down those three cubs and *rip them apart!* Oh, and rip off the bird's wings, too."

"Yeah, I think it's time we were leaving," Nala muttered, before running back in the direction she had been dragged. "You

should all be following me, by the way!"

Simba and Haiba nodded at each other, before running after Nala. "Don't forget about us!" Simba called. "I don't want to be torn apart!"

"Me, neither!" Zazu cried, before flying after the three cubs. He glanced behind, and could see the rest of the Mungu Pride chasing after them. "I'm too young to die!"

"So let me get this straight," said Mufasa, upon hearing Simba, Nala, Haiba and Zazu all explain their story. "Zazu decided to take you all on an 'educational trip'?"

The three cubs and Zazu all nodded, false grins on all their faces. "That's right!" Haiba exclaimed. "Simba was all in the mood for education!"

"Simba' and 'education'," said Sarabi, who was standing next to her mate. "I never thought I'd hear those two things together in a sentence."

"Oh, yeah." Simba nodded innocently. "I learnt a lot of things. There was nothing remotely dangerous involved. Zazu showed us lots of *not*-dangerous things, like... plants."

"And other very safe things," Nala chimed in, trying to sound convincing.

"Well..." A smile formed on Mufasa's face. "I must say I'm very impressed, Simba. You seem to be showing some maturity. Well done."

With that, Mufasa and Sarabi walked away, leaving the three cubs very pleased. "You see?" said Simba, smiling. "We managed to ditch the Mungu Pride, allow Zazu to keep his job, and also made it look I was mature. If that's not a victory, then I don't know what is!"

"I can't thank you enough, young master," Zazu told him, truly grateful. "If the King found out I'd been off on an adventure with you, then he would have fed me to an elephant!"

"No problem," said Simba, smiling. "And do you want to know something, Zazu? You're not that bad."

"Really?" Zazu was surprised. "I'm *not*?"

"Nah." Simba shook his head. "Sure, you were a little scared, but not as much as I thought you would be."

Zazu was almost bursting with happiness. "Oh, this had just made my day!" Zazu exclaimed, before flying off into the sky. "I'm going to tell everyone I know! The Prince actually likes me... *Likes* me!"

"He's happy," said Nala, before putting a paw around Simba's shoulder. "And so am I."

Simba shrugged. "I guess I am, too," he admitted. "Especially now that my parents trust me a little more."

Haiba wanted to ask Simba a question. "So, would you have *really* stayed as their god if we hadn't shown up?"

"Hmm..." Simba didn't exactly have an answer. "I'm not sure. I mean, I was kinda angry back then – and you know what my dark side's like."

"Yes, thank you," said Haiba. "We've all met the King of Dreams."

"So I actually *might* have stayed with them," Simba told his friends. "I mean, if you were in my place, then wouldn't *you* have felt the same?"

Nala and Haiba looked at each other and shrugged. They didn't have an answer, either.

"Exactly." Simba smiled, before heading back towards the den. "Now come on, guys. It's evening, and that can only mean one thing."

The three of them grinned. "Dinner!"

The End

AN: Aw! What a lovely ending. It's almost as if I'm preparing you for the most depressing story in the world. So, did anyone spot the hints? I'm talking about Haiba, here. Come on, you must have noticed? You *did*, didn't you? Come on...

But hey, two stories left in the series! Just two! This has been seriously quick, hasn't it? Oh, well. Time flies when you're having fun.

NEXT TIME: A miserable cub is struck by a bolt of lightning, and is granted amazing powers, which he uses to give a shock to the Pride Lands... *literally*.